nas been drawn to a news-items which appeared in the Times of India, dated the 11th August, 1998 entitled "Directory of Registered Recruitment agents planned";

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that there is no labour attache stationed in countries where the Indian labourers are working in a large number such as Middle East countries, to look after their welfare and prevent their exploitation; and

(d) if so, the details of such countries where labour attaches are proposed to be posted?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) to (d) In a meeting of the Protectors of Emigrants held on 10th August, 1998 the need for initiating certain measures for protecting the interests of workers going abroad for contractual employment was emphasized. These measures, inter alia, included the following:

(a) preparation of a Directory of registered recruiting agents and dissemination of the same so as to apprise the intending emigrants of the agents who are legally authorised to make recruitment of workers for deployment with the foreign employers;

(b) creation of special post of Labour Attaches in the Indian Missions abroad for solving the problems/grievances of the Indian workers during the course of their employment with the foreign employers or otherwise;

(c) setting up of a Central Manpower Export Promotion Council to render promotional and advisory services in the area of manpower export; and

(d) constitution of a Welfare Fund for the workers and/or their families in the eventuality of the worker's death or their becoming disabled during the course of employment with the foreign employers.

2. In most of the countries, particularly in the Middle East where there is much concentration of Indian workers, the officers posted in the Indian Missions have been given specific charge of labour matters and these officers have been designated as Labour Attaches or Consular (Labour). There have been suggestions that Labour Attaches may be posted in the Indian Missions specifically for this area of work. This suggestion is being examined in consultation with the Ministry of External Affairs.

Removal of Chief Executives of PSUs

*114 SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have removed some Chief Executives/CMDs of various PSUs under the control of Ministry of Industry during 1998 without following the terms of employment;

(b) whether such a decision amounts to arbitrariness; and

(c) if so, the facts and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

लक्ष्मीबाई नगर में प्लास्टिक निर्मित ऊपरी टैंकों का लगाया जाना

*115 श्री सूर्यभान पाटील वहाडणेः क्या शहरी कार्य और रोजगार मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे किः

(क) क्या यह सच है कि लक्ष्मीबाई नगर में सीमेंट के पुराने ऊपरी जल टैंकों की स्थिति जर-जर हो गयी है जिसके कारण उनमें से लगातार पानी रिसता रहता है; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो सरकार सीमेंट के इन टैंकों के स्थान पर प्लास्टिक टैंक कब तक लगाने का विचार रखती है?

शहरी कार्य और रोजगार मंत्री (श्री राम जेठमलानी): (क) जी, हां। लक्ष्मीबाई नगर में सीमेंट कन्क्रीट टैंक बहुत पुराने हैं। इनमें से कुछ टैंकों से पानी रिसने लगा है और उन्हें बदलने की आवश्यकता है।

(ख) चालू वित्तीय वर्ष के दौरान धन उपलब्ध होने पर पानी रिसने वाले क्षतिग्रस्त टैंकों को बदल दिया जाएगा।

Export of Agricultural Products

*116 SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that agricultural products constitute 15-18 per cent of the country's total exports yet India's share of the world trade in agriculture is only one per cent; and

(b) if so, what Government are proposing to do to increase the share of agricultural products in the world market?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) Yes Sir. India's share of the World trade in agriculture is only 1%. India's share in the world trade of agricultural products, except for the traditional items exported, has been low due to lack of export orientation in domestic production. Further, as a policy exports of Items of mass consumption are only permitted in a manner which does not compromise the food security of the country. The agricultural products exported from India include tea, coffee, raw cotton, rice, wheat, coarse grains, tobacco, fruit juices, cashew, sesame, niger seed, oil meal extractions, sugar, flowers and horticulture products, fresh fruits and vegetables, processed fruits and juices, meat and meat preperations.

(b) Some of the steps taken/proposed to be taken to enhance exports of these products include:

1. Providing assistance for raising small and large nurseries for production of good quality planting material, upgradation of technical knowhow of farmers through demonstrations, trainings and publicity, rejuvenation of old orchards, area expansion, supply of minikits for vegetables, improving productivity and training of farmers.
2. Provision of soft loans for setting up of grading/processing centres, auction platforms, ripening/curing chambers and quality testing equipment.
3. Providing financial assistance to exporters / growers / cooperative societies for development of infrastructural facilities such as purchase of specialised transport units, establishment of pre-cooling/ cold storage facilities, integrated post-harvest handling systems (pack houses).
4. Grant of financial assistance for Improved packaging and strengthening of quality control.
5. Establishment of vapour heat treatment facilities for improving the acceptability of the product especially the mangoes in overseas markets.
6. Grant of Air-Freight Subsidy for exports of selected fresh vegetables and fruits.
7. Arranging promotional campaigns such as buyer-seller meets and participation in important international fairs and exhibitions.
8. Setting up of intergrated cargo handling and cold storage facilities at various International Airports for handling export of perishable items such as fresh fruits and vegetables.
9. Setting up of laboratories for testing of products to ensure quality; technology transfer; process upgradation and product development.